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SCEPTICISM ABOUT COMMUNITY: POLYBIUS ON PELOPONNESIAN EXILES, GOOD FAITH (*PISTIS*) AND THE ACHAIAN LEAGUE[1]

Abstract: This article examines the ethical foundations of Polybius' political thought, taking as a case study Polybius' ideological representations of groups of Peloponnesian exiles. It argues that relevant passages belong to a wider Greek tradition of paradigmatic representations of exile groups. When considered alongside that tradition and the rest of Polybius' work, these passages show Polybius to be self-consciously sceptical of traditional Greek community-oriented ethical and political notions. They show him to be offering an alternative, less idealistic 'limited' conception of good political organisation, which gives special weight to punctilious respect for law, contracts, procedures, fair play and strict reciprocity.

1. Introduction

This article examines Polybius' ethical and political thought through the lens of some of his narratives and evaluations of Hellenistic Peloponnesian politics. In 1995, A.M. Eckstein showed in his *Moral Vision in the* Histories *of Polybius* that it is important to investigate Polybius' positive views about ethics: Polybius was not merely a Machiavellian cataloguer of power politics, but also articulated a coherent 'moral vision'. Following Eckstein's lead, C.B. Champion argued in his 2004 book *Cultural Politics in Polybius'* Histories that an ethical and cultural dichotomy between Hellenic rational virtue and barbarian mindlessness and vice underpins much of the *Histories*. This article extends the overall approach adopted by Eckstein and Champion, while offering a quite different interpretation of the content of Polybius' moral vision.

The method used is to examine the ethical and political significance of Polybius' discussions of the behaviour and treatment of exiles and refugees from Peloponnesian poleis. Significant connections and contrasts are identified between passages of Polybius, as well as between Polybian passages and sections of works of Greek historiography and

1 I would like to thank the participants in a conference on 'Polybe: Historien-Philosophe?' at the Maison Française in Oxford in May 2008 for their comments on an early version of this paper. I am also very grateful to A. Chaniotis, C. Darbo-Peschanski, Ch. Gray, M. Griffin, S. Hornblower, J. Ma and T. Rood and the referees for Historia for help with the written version, and to J. Briscoe for sending me relevant sections of Briscoe (2008) in advance of publication.

philosophy by other authors. This article thus develops further a recent move to apply to Polybius' text types of literary analysis, sensitive to intertextual relationships and to internal allusions and long-range patterns,[2] so far quite rarely applied to Polybius[3] but much more commonly applied to Herodotus, Thucydides and Xenophon,[4] as well as to Greek historical and biographical writers of the Imperial period.[5]

Polybius' discussions of exiles are very revealing evidence for his ethical and political thinking. This is partly because the political entitlements of Peloponnesian exiles represented a perennially controversial topic in the politics of Polybius' native Peloponnese in the Hellenistic period:[6] they were a matter very likely to elicit a polemical treatment from him. However, it is also because Polybius was writing in an established tradition: the moral qualities and political status of exiles were a constant subject of fascination and enquiry in Classical culture.[7]

Many Classical and Hellenistic citizens of poleis and literary authors took a strong interest in how particular individuals and communities responded to the supreme Greek misfortune of becoming ἄπολις ('lacking a polis').[8] This was probably due to widespread attachment to the idea, shared by Polybius himself, that the manner in which a man copes with adversity can be an excellent guide to his character.[9] It was commonly thought that the pressures of exile bring into relief, or accentuate, existing features of the character of an individual or community. It could also be thought that those pressures lead individuals and groups to take on new, extreme political and ethical tendencies.

Indeed, it was common for Greeks to present a group of exiles as an ethical or political paradigm. In everyday political rhetoric, citizens of a polis could commemorate a period of collective exile, when all or most of the citizen body had been expelled, as a paradigmatic moment of civic unity in adversity. This is clearest in later-fifth- and fourth-century BC Athenian democratic discourse: successive large groups of displaced Athenians were each commemorated as instantiations of a patriotic, egalitarian, united δῆμος-in-exile. This kind of idealising rhetoric is attested in relation to the Athenians

2 For the application of this type of approach to Polybius' text, see especially Rood (2012). Note also Schepens and Bollansée (2005), which deals principally with Polybius' explicit criticisms of earlier historians and representations of their work. On allusion and intertextuality as categories for studying ancient historiography in general, see Hornblower (1994b), 54–72; Marincola (1997).

3 One reason why such approaches have not been extensively applied to Polybius is that Polybius' work has often been thought to lack striking literary qualities (compare Champion (2004), 18).

4 See, for example, Hornblower (1991–2008); Dillery (1995); Rood (1998); Flower and Marincola (2002).

5 See, for example, Pelling (1980); (1988).

6 See, for example, Seibert (1979), 199–208.

7 See, for example, Gaertner (2007).

8 Compare the philosophical genre of consolatory works *On Exile* or *On Why Exile is Bearable*, of which the only (partially) surviving Hellenistic example is by the Cynic Teles (see Fuentes Gonzales (1998)).

9 See Polyb. 6.2.6, with Eckstein (1995), 65.

displaced by the Persians in 480 BC,[10] by the oligarchy of the Four Hundred in 411 BC,[11] by the Thirty Tyrants in 404–3 BC[12] and by the oligarchic regime sponsored by Antipater in 322–319 BC,[13] and possibly also in relation to those displaced by Demetrius of Phaleron's oligarchic regime of 317–307 BC.[14] Outside Athens, the same tendency is attested for three poleis of the Eastern Aegean in the early Hellenistic period: in possibly interconnected moves, the poleis of Eresos, Samos and Priene each developed civic traditions about the expulsion or exclusion from the city of all or part of a united, corporate δῆμος by an internal or external oppressor.[15]

When exiles had been expelled by a rival domestic faction, as at Athens in 411 BC or 404–3 BC or Eresos or Priene in the early Hellenistic period, it was probably a very effective way of easing tensions to pretend that all or most of a united δῆμος had been expelled by a lone tyrant or a few reprobates, the only ones who had remained in the city and run the controversial new regime: if that illusion could be maintained, there would be no blemish on the appearance of civic unity. In a more positive way, such traditions could have served as stirring paradigms of civic patriotism and virtue for citizens to emulate. The stress was usually, as in the multiple Athenian cases, on exiles' heroism and independence. In the Hellenistic period, however, some poleis commemorated their citizens more as gentle refugees, grateful recipients of external aid.[16]

Exile groups were also represented as ethical and political paradigms, dystopian as well as utopian, by literary authors. Herodotus presented the displaced Athenians on Salamis of 480–79 BC as a paradigm of strong Athenian and Greek patriotism, at least until they stoned to death the Athenian citizen Lykidas, who had supported the idea of reaching an accommodation with the Persians.[17] In a more extensive case, several scholars have shown that Xenophon presented the wandering mercenaries of his *Anabasis*, who were effectively homeless refugees after the death of their commander Cyrus, as a community with first utopian and then dystopian characteristics.[18] Xenophon probably

10 Hdt. 8.79–80, 143–4; 9.3–6; Plut. *Them.* 10–17; Lycurg. *In Leocr.* 68–71, 122; Dem. 18.204–205; cf. Hirzel (1909), 263–4; Rosivach (1987), 240–1; Allen (2000), 142–5.

11 Thuc. 8.75–7. Cf. Hornblower (2004), 253–4; Forsdyke (2005), 183, 189–90; Hornblower (1991–2008), vol. III, 977–81.

12 E. g. Rhodes-Osborne, *GHI* 4; Pl. *Ap.* 21a; Lys. 25 and 31, esp. 31.9; Dem. 20.48; Aeschin. 3.181, 187, 208. Cf. Thomas (1989), 132–8; Wolpert (2002), part II; Forsdyke (2005), 262–3. The sixth-century BC exiles from the Pisistratids were often assimilated to these exiles: Andoc. 1.106, 2.26; Thomas (1989), 139–41, 252–4; Forsdyke (2005), 129, 267.

13 *IG* II^2 448, ll. 62–4.

14 See Lape (2004), 216–17, 234, 237–9, 241, for probably relevant symbolism in Menander's *Sikyonioi*.

15 Rhodes-Osborne, *GHI* 83, β side, ll. 1–3 and γ front, ll. 7–8; *IG* XII 6 1 17–41 (cf. 42–3); Magnetto (2008), text (pp. 34–45), ll. 87–102.

16 In addition to the Samian case (*IG* XII 6 1 17–41 (cf. 42–3)), note also Ampolo (2001), Entella text A2, ll. 9–13.

17 For the stoning, see Hdt. 9.5: the stoning of Lykidas by the Athenian men prompted the Athenian women to stone to death Lykidas' wife and children.

18 See Nussbaum (1967), e. g. 157–8; Dillery (1995), 64–95; Rood (2004b).

even manipulated the factual details of his account to suit his ideological purposes.[19] Schmitzer has argued persuasively that Xenophon also deliberately shaped his representation of some exiles in his *Hellenica*: the Theban counter-revolutionaries returning from exile in 379 BC are presented as a new 'Seven against Thebes'.[20] To take an example from Hellenistic historiography, Diodorus presented some Syracusan anti-tyrannical exiles resorting to an attempt to stone their unreliable Spartan commander Akrotatos in 314 BC: an act which was simultaneously a utopian demonstration of collective fortitude and concern for virtue and a dystopian lurch into mob rule.[21]

Relevant literary authors were probably consciously participating in a tradition, obeying and adapting conventions concerning the representation of exile groups. For example, references to a group of displaced or exiled Greeks stoning, 'almost stoning' or 'attempting to stone' opponents, similar to those mentioned above, are strikingly pervasive.[22] To take a particular case of the overall phenomenon, Xenophon's presentation of the wandering mercenaries of his *Anabasis* as a heroic, but then mob-like, displaced community can be interpreted as involving an allusion to Herodotus' displaced Athenians of 480–79 BC. At first, Xenophon's displaced mercenaries are a tight-knit, heroic community, determined to resist the Persian King and the Persian Empire, even when all they have are their weapons and their virtue.[23] However, after they reach the sea, a triumph which is their equivalent of victory in the Battle of Salamis, they engage in mob behaviour: like the Athenians on Salamis, they even resort to stoning.[24]

This article seeks to demonstrate that Polybius, a self-conscious civic Greek and heir to Greek civic traditions,[25] contributed to this tradition of paradigmatic representations of exile groups, reacting against some of the assumptions fundamental to it. The central focus, which is discussed in section 2, is Polybius' paradigmatic representation of the strict preservation of faith (πίστις) with the Achaian League by the citizens of his home polis, Arcadian Megalopolis, when they were expelled from their city *en masse* in 223 BC by the forces of Cleomenes III of Sparta, during a truce in the Cleomenean War.[26]

19 Lane Fox (2004), introduction, 42–4; Rood (2004a), 210.

20 Schmitzer (1998).

21 Diod. Sic. 19.71.5 (probably based on Timaeus). On the moral ambiguity of stoning in Greek contexts, see Hirzel (1909), 263; Rosivach (1987), 236, 243–4.

22 See Hdt. 9.5 (mentioned above); Thuc. 8.75.1; Xen. *An*. 5.7.5–23, 6.6.7; Dem. 18.204–205; Lycurg. *In Leocr*. 122; Polyb. 2.61.5 (the passage discussed extensively in section 2 below); Livy 38.33 (the passage discussed extensively in section 3 below); Diod. Sic. 19.71.5.

23 The insistence of an Athenian speaker at Xen. *An*. 2.1.12 that continued possession of weapons ensures a meaningful existence, even while displaced, recalls the famous insistence of Themistokles in 480 BC that the Athenians' continued possession of their fleet preserved their polis status, despite their exile (Hdt. 8.61).

24 Hdt. 9.5; Xen. *An*. 5.7.5–23, 6.6.7. For the general play on Persian War traditions and motifs in Xenophon's portrayal of the displaced mercenaries, see Rood (2004a), 96–7; Rood (2004b), 313–4, 317; Ma (2004), 337. Note especially Xenophon's own supposed words at Xen. *An*. 3.2.11–13.

25 See Millar (1987).

26 Polyb. 2.61. This forms part of the 'Achaica' of Book II, which some have regarded as an earlier, separate work which Polybius inserted into his *Histories* (see Champion (2004), 11, n. 18 for bibli-

The events connected with this expulsion probably constituted an important civic tradition in Polybius' home city,[27] comparable to the Athenian, Eresian, Samian and Prienian traditions considered above. As in some of those cases, it was probably imperative after the subsequent return to the city to emphasise that the citizen body had remained united and patriotic in the period of adversity, in opposition to Cleomenes. Indeed, Polybius himself suppresses the detail, recorded by Plutarch, that two of the 'reputable and powerful' Megalopolitans, Lysandridas and Thearidas, were taken prisoner by Cleomenes, after which they engaged in negotiations with him, travelling as his envoys to their exiled fellow citizens, based in Messene.[28] Polybius was probably motivated to suppress this detail by the fact that Thearidas was his own grandfather,[29] but also by desire to preserve and embellish one of his own city's patriotic traditions. In addition, he was probably self-consciously engaging with the literary tradition of paradigmatic representations of exiles: as explored in section 2, he subtly contrasted the Megalopolitan refugees with literary representations of the Athenian refugees of 480–79 BC, who faced similar circumstances and dilemmas.

Although Polybius' representation of the Megalopolitan refugees of 223 BC is the main focus, this article also considers Polybius' representations of other exiles and debates about exiles, as well as other parts of his work, especially some of his theoretical comments about politics in Book VI. In section 3, the hypothesis is defended that Livy's account of the behaviour of a group of Spartan exiles at Compasion in 188 BC can be used to reconstruct Polybius' account of the same events. It is highly plausible that, in the account which underlay Livy's, Polybius represented these Spartan exiles as a dystopian paradigm of breach of faith and counter-productive ethical idealism, a foil to the straightforward preservation of faith shown by the Megalopolitan refugees of 223 BC. In the concluding section 4, it is shown that Polybius' representations of exiles from Arcadian Kynaitha in the 220s, and of debates in the Achaian League in the period 188–179 BC about controversial groups of Spartan exiles, fit well within the framework established in sections 2 and 3.

The detailed examination of Polybius' representations of Peloponnesian exiles, alongside other passages, yields an interpretation of Polybius' 'moral vision' quite far removed from those of Eckstein and Champion: it suggests that Polybius' moral vision was more distinctive, innovative and polemical than Eckstein's 'rather traditional moral code of heroism, glory, honor and duty'[30] or the systematic contrasting of monolithic

ography). The question of the strength of this hypothesis has, however, little bearing on the argument here. Even the claim in section 3 below that Polybius intended a later section of his work to be a foil to chapter 2.61 would not be excluded if the 'Achaica' were a late addition to the main *Histories*: Polybius could still have intended to draw a contrast with a passage in that earlier work in its initial, separate form.

27 For Megalopolitan collective memory of these events, see Livy 32.22.10.

28 Plut. *Cleom.* 24.2–7.

29 von Scala (1890), 15 n.1; Africa (1961), 33; Errington (1969), 16.

30 Eckstein (1995), 54; compare 272–84.

Hellenic virtue with monolithic barbarian vice which Champion identifies.[31] The evidence of the passages discussed suggests that Polybius was not simply reproducing a conservative notion of Hellenic reason and virtue, open-ended and all-encompassing. Rather, he was actively promoting a particular, fine-grained moral vision which gained distinctiveness from being defined against rival Greek models.

The relevant passages suggest that Polybius reacted against some of the dominant, idealistic assumptions of past Greek ethical and political thinking, centred on substantial notions of virtue, community and personal fulfilment. In particular, he rejected the view that the virtuous man must necessarily be a self-sacrificing, supererogative contributor to his polis, which must be a close-knit, unified civic community, composed of citizens committed to shared elevated ethical and political ideals. He rejected relevant idealistic assumptions in favour of what are defined in section 2 as 'limited' conceptions of virtue and the good polis. These rival conceptions gave special emphasis and priority to the preservation of law, contracts, agreements, fair play and strict, tit-for-tat reciprocity, elevating them above political friendship, more substantial and self-sacrificing forms of virtue and other ideals commonly thought to have greater value.

2. Polybius' Presentation of the Megalopolitan Refugees of 223 BC

2.1. Introduction

This section considers in turn the ethical and political significance of Polybius' paradigmatic representation of the Megalopolitan refugees of 223 BC. Polybius describes the Megalopolitans' expulsion and conduct in exile in Messene in the course of his polemic against the earlier Hellenistic historian Phylarchus. According to Polybius, Phylarchus, a pro-Spartan and anti-Achaian, gave an unreasonable account of the Megalopolitans' behaviour:[32]

> Χωρίς τε τούτων τὰς μὲν Μαντινέων ἡμῖν συμφορὰς μετ' αὐξήσεως καὶ διαθέσεως ἐξηγήσατο, δῆλον ὅτι καθήκειν ὑπολαμβάνων τοῖς συγγραφεῦσι τὰς παρανόμους τῶν πράξεων ἐπισημαίνεσθαι, τῆς δὲ Μεγαλοπολιτῶν γενναιότητος, ἣ περὶ τοὺς αὐτοὺς ἐχρήσαντο καιρούς, οὐδὲ κατὰ ποσὸν ἐποιήσατο μνήμην, ὥσπερ τὸ τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἐξαριθμεῖσθαι τῶν πραξάντων οἰκειότερον ὑπάρχον τῆς ἱστορίας τοῦ τὰ καλὰ καὶ δίκαια τῶν ἔργων ἐπισημαίνεσθαι, ἢ τοὺς ἐντυγχάνοντας τοῖς ὑπομνήμασιν ἧττόν τι διορθουμένους ὑπὸ τῶν σπουδαίων καὶ ζηλωτῶν ἔργων ἢπερ ὑπὸ τῶν παρανόμων καὶ φευκτῶν πράξεων. ὁ δὲ πῶς μὲν ἔλαβε Κλεομένης τὴν πόλιν καὶ πῶς ἀκέραιον διαφυλάξας ἐξαπέστειλε παραχρῆμα πρὸς τοὺς

31 See especially Champion (2004), chs. 4 and 5.

32 For recent analysis of Polybius' hostility to Phylarchus, and its political context, see Schepens (2005). On this passage in particular, see also Walbank (2005), 16; Haegemans and Kosmetatou (2005), 137.

Μεγαλοπολίτας εἰς τὴν Μεσσήνην γραμματοφόρους, ἀξιῶν αὐτοὺς ἀβλαβῆ κομισαμένους τὴν ἑαυτῶν πατρίδα κοινωνῆσαι τῶν ἰδίων πραγμάτων, ταῦτα μὲν ἡμῖν ἐδήλωσε, βουλόμενος ὑποδεῖξαι τὴν Κλεομένους μεγαλοψυχίαν καὶ μετριότητα πρὸς τοὺς πολεμίους. ἔτι δὲ πῶς οἱ Μεγαλοπολῖται τῆς ἐπιστολῆς ἀναγινωσκομένης οὐκ ἐάσαιεν εἰς τέλος ἀναγνωσθῆναι, μικροῦ δὲ καταλεύσαιεν τοὺς γραμματοφόρους, ἕως τούτου διεσάφησε. τὸ δ' ἀκόλουθον καὶ τὸ τῆς ἱστορίας ἴδιον ἀφεῖλεν, τὸν ἔπαινον καὶ τὴν ἐπ' ἀγαθῷ μνήμην τῶν ἀξιολόγων προαιρέσεων. καίτοι γ' ἐμποδὼν ἦν. εἰ γὰρ τοὺς λόγῳ καὶ δόγματι μόνον ὑπομείναντας πόλεμον ὑπὲρ φίλων καὶ συμμάχων ἄνδρας ἀγαθοὺς νομίζομεν, τοῖς δὲ καὶ χώρας καταφθορὰν καὶ πολιορκίαν ἀναδεξαμένοις οὐ μόνον ἔπαινον, ἀλλὰ καὶ χάριτας καὶ δωρεὰς τὰς μεγίστας ἀπονέμομεν, τίνα γε χρὴ περὶ Μεγαλοπολιτῶν ἔχειν διάληψιν; ἆρ' οὐχὶ τὴν σεμνοτάτην καὶ βελτίστην; οἳ πρῶτον μὲν τὴν χώραν Κλεομένει προεῖντο, μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα πάλιν ὁλοσχερῶς ἔπταισαν τῇ πατρίδι διὰ τὴν πρὸς τοὺς Ἀχαιοὺς αἵρεσιν, τὸ δὲ τελευταῖον, δοθείσης ἀνελπίστως καὶ παραδόξως αὐτοῖς ἐξουσίας ἀβλαβῆ ταύτην ἀπολαβεῖν, προείλαντο στέρεσθαι χώρας, τάφων, ἱερῶν, πατρίδος, τῶν ὑπαρχόντων, ἁπάντων συλλήβδην τῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἀναγκαιοτάτων χάριν τοῦ μὴ προδοῦναι τὴν πρὸς τοὺς συμμάχους πίστιν. οὗ τί κάλλιον ἔργον ἢ γέγονεν ἢ γένοιτ' ἄν; ἐπὶ τί δ' ἂν μᾶλλον συγγραφεὺς ἐπιστήσαι τοὺς ἀκούοντας; διὰ τίνος δ' ἔργου μᾶλλον ἂν παρορμήσαι πρὸς φυλακὴν πίστεως καὶ πρὸς ἀληθινῶν πραγμάτων καὶ βεβαίων κοινωνίαν; ὧν οὐδεμίαν ἐποιήσατο μνήμην Φύλαρχος, τυφλώττων, ὥς γ' ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ, περὶ τὰ κάλλιστα καὶ μάλιστα συγγραφεῖ καθήκοντα τῶν ἔργων.[33]

Apart from these things, (Phylarchus) treated the misfortunes of the Mantineans with amplification and rhetoric, clearly thinking that it is the duty of writers to draw attention to outrageous acts, but did not make any mention of the nobility of the Megalopolitans, which they showed around the same time, as if it is a more important part of history to catalogue the errors of past agents than to draw attention to fine and just acts, or as if those who engage in study of historical accounts are less likely to be corrected by fine actions to be emulated than by outrageous actions to be avoided. He revealed to us how Cleomenes took the city and, having kept the city intact, immediately sent letter-bearers to the Megalopolitans at Messene, urging that they should take back their country unharmed and ally themselves with him: he revealed this because he wished to show Cleomenes' great-spiritedness and moderation towards enemies. He even made clear how the Megalopolitans, as the letter was being read out, did not allow it to be read to the end, but almost stoned the letter-bearers. However, he removed the next event and the thing most proper to history, praise and favourable recording of remarkable choices, even though this was a manifest case. For if we think those men good who by word or decree alone have endured a war on behalf of friends or allies, and distribute not only praise but also

33 Polyb. 2.61.

> the greatest favours and gifts to those who have suffered destruction of their rural territory and a siege, what attitude should we have towards the Megalopolitans? Not the most solemn and best? They first gave their territory up to Cleomenes, and after this they completely lost their homeland as a result of their support for the Achaians. Finally, when, beyond their hopes and unexpectedly, they gained an opportunity to take their homeland back unharmed, they chose to be deprived of their territory, graves, sanctuaries, homeland and property, in sum of all the most necessary things among men, for the sake of not betraying their good faith towards their allies. What finer act than this has happened or could happen? To what rather should an author direct the attention of his audience? Through what other action could an author better urge his audience towards the maintaining of good faith and the sharing of true and firm business? But Phylarchus made no mention of any of these things, blind, as it seems to me, to the finest actions and those most suitable for an author.

2.2. The Ethical Significance of the Refugees' Behaviour

2.2.1. Preservation of πίστις and ἀληθινῶν πραγμάτων καὶ βεβαίων κοινωνία

Polybius regarded the Megalopolitan refugees' behaviour as an incomparable paradigm: an author could find no better example by which to urge (παρορμᾶν) his audience towards the maintenance of πίστις and ἀληθινῶν πραγμάτων καὶ βεβαίων κοινωνία. The generic wording of this panegyrical rhetoric suggests that Polybius intended to offer this case as a paradigm of good faith (πίστις) in general, not only of interstate πίστις.

As for ἀληθινῶν πραγμάτων καὶ βεβαίων κοινωνία, the translation is controversial. The original Loeb translation, by W.R. Paton, is 'true and faithful comradeship'. This is difficult to accept: κοινωνία does not here mean 'comradeship', but has a more neutral meaning as part of the term πραγμάτων κοινωνία. Polybius frequently uses πραγμάτων κοινωνία and κοινωνεῖν τῶν πραγμάτων as stock phrases to refer to interstate alliances or their formation and maintenance.[34] According to this conception of an interstate alliance, an alliance is literally a 'sharing of business' between states.

The revised translation in Walbank's and Habicht's recent revision of Paton's Loeb translation ('shar(ing) in the enterprises of an honourable and firmly established state') is also open to question. This revision derives from Walbank's commentary on Polybius, where he suggests translating 'shar(ing) in the enterprises of an honourable and well-established state', on the grounds that τὰ πράγματα can mean 'the state'.[35] However, it may well not be necessary to resort to this meaning of τὰ πράγματα, given that πραγμάτων κοινωνία is a common term in Polybius for an alliance or 'sharing of business'. Moreover, the adjectives 'true and firm' arguably apply more smoothly to the statements and undertakings of those involved in an alliance or other contract

34 See, for example, Polyb. 1.6.7–8; 2.37.10; 2.61.4; 3.60.11.

35 Walbank (1957–1979), vol. I, *ad* 2.61.11.

than to a state. Another relevant consideration is that, if Polybius had meant to refer to 'sharing in an honourable and well-established state', it would have been curious for him to suggest that the Megalopolitans' example was an excellent way for the historian to urge others towards it: most individuals and groups cannot choose the nature of the states with which they have to associate.

It is thus more plausible to regard the phrase ἀληθινῶν πραγμάτων καὶ βεβαίων κοινωνία as referring to the formation and preservation of reliable alliances or other contractual relationships. The narrow translation 'the sharing of true and firm interstate alliances' would be quite defensible. However, it counts against this translation that, as suggested above, Polybius appears to be here offering a general moral maxim, towards whose observance any author should urge his readers. In this light, the broader translation 'sharing of true and firm business' or 'affairs' is preferable. This translation is consistent with Polybius' use of adjectives in agreement with πραγμάτων: the insertion of those adjectives strongly suggests that Polybius was not using πραγμάτων κοινωνία unthinkingly as a stock phrase, meaning 'alliance', but was directly conscious of its constituent elements, 'sharing' and 'business'.

With this broader meaning, the phrase refers to the underlying nature of good faith (πίστις): faithful partners do not exchange false information or unfirm promises.[36] In Classical Greek authors, κοινὰ πράγματα are generally matters of concern to a whole community, about which communal deliberation is undertaken:[37] they are matters of fact, which do not admit of being 'false' or 'unfirm'. In this passage of Polybius, by contrast, the κοινὰ πράγματα must be the information and pledges exchanged by the parties. This reflects a different conception of 'co-operation', very relevant to the concerns of this section: to 'have things in common' does not necessarily involve having substantial common interests or a common outlook and agenda, but can involve simply exchanging information and promises.

2.2.2. The Megalopolitan Refugees as a Distinctive Ethical Paradigm, Contrasted with Precedents

It has long been recognised that Polybius manipulated his account of the events of 223 BC in order to give the most favourable possible impression of his city and his family: for example, by suppressing Thearidas' defection. It has also been recognised that this passage plays a crucial role in Polybius' presentation of his 'moral vision'.[38] However, close examination of Polybius' presentation reveals an even greater level of sophistication in ethical and political thinking and rhetoric.

36 For an argument that this quite narrow notion of πίστις was dominant in contemporary Greek, see Ferrary (1988), 76–81.

37 E. g. Isoc. 7.9; Dem. 5.7; Lycurg. *In Leocr*. 29.

38 Eckstein (1995), 22–3, 248–9, recognises this passage as crucial evidence that Polybius did believe that history could and should serve a didactic moral purpose.

This is due to the fact that Polybius almost certainly intended to allude to earlier events in Greek history, and earlier representations of them. For example, he could well have intended readers to recognise a favourable comparison between the Megalopolitan refugees' conduct and that of the fifth-century BC Plataeans, who refused a Spartan offer to take over their city in trust for the duration of the Peloponnesian War, choosing instead continued alliance with their old allies, the Athenians.[39] Although they were not in exile at the time, one result of the decision to preserve good faith with old allies at all costs was that a substantial group of Plataeans subsequently fled into exile in Athens.[40] Polybius could also have hoped that readers would recall an earlier case of special praise from a historian for the citizens of a Peloponnesian polis for their loyalty to allies: Xenophon's enthusiastic praise of the fourth-century BC Phliasians for their loyalty to Sparta.[41] In Polybius' example, however, the loyalty praised was of the inverse type: loyalty to other fellow Peloponnesians, in defiance of the Spartans.

Nevertheless, the most precise precedent for the Megalopolitan refugees' predicament and conduct involves the Athenians of 480–79 BC. Both the Athenians and the Megalopolitans were forced to flee their cities by aggrandising conquerors: Xerxes and Cleomenes respectively. Moreover, both subsequently rejected an unexpected offer, through envoys, to regain control of their polis in return for a demeaning alliance with a traditional enemy: the Persians and the Spartans respectively.[42]

In one version of the events of 480–79 BC, the Athenians were still in exile when they received the offer to regain control of their polis. This is evident from a section of Lycurgus' 330 BC speech against Leocrates, in which the Athenians are presented as having 'almost stoned' the Persian envoy, Alexander of Macedon, while still refugees.[43] In Herodotus' account,[44] unlike Lycurgus', the Athenians had briefly returned to their city when they received Alexander's embassy. Nevertheless, even in Herodotus' version, they were still in a sense 'refugees', since their homes and temples had been destroyed and they did not have a secure grip on their territory: Xerxes' instructions to Mardonius were to 'give *back* (ἀποδοῦναι) to the Athenians their territory', if they agreed to the terms,[45] not some variation of 'allow them to keep occupying their territory'.

It is very likely that Polybius intended readers to recognise the close parallels between the events of 480–79 BC and 223 BC. Lycurgus' reference to the Athenian refugees 'almost stoning' the Persian envoy (μικροῦ δεῖν κατέλευσαν) makes this

39 See Thuc. 2.71–4; compare [Dem.] 59.102. For the strong probability that Polybius had a good knowledge of Thucydides, see Walbank (1972), 40–3; see also Hornblower (1994b), 61. Rood (2012) even identifies significant verbal and thematic echoes of Thucydides' narrative in Polybius' work.

40 See. Thuc. 3.20–4; [Dem.] 59.103.

41 Xen. *Hell*. 7.2–3.1, esp. 3.1.

42 Admittedly, an important difference is that the Athenians' home shrines had already been destroyed when they were offered the opportunity to regain control, whereas the Megalopolitans' polis was still intact.

43 Lycurg. *In Leocr.* 68–71.

44 Hdt. 8.140–144.

45 Hdt. 8.140a.2.

probability even stronger, since Polybius refers to the Megalopolitan refugees 'almost stoning' Cleomenes' envoys in almost identical language (μικροῦ δὲ καταλεύσαιεν τοὺς γραμματοφόρους).[46] This close echo makes it probable that Polybius knew Lycurgus' account of the Athenians' behaviour in 480–79 BC, or at least one other account in the same tradition.

It is, admittedly, impossible to prove that Polybius had a good knowledge of Herodotus' account: he does not engage directly with Herodotus' work in his *Histories*.[47] However, it is very likely that Polybius had absorbed Herodotus' work during his education and reflections about history and geography.[48] Moreover, some aspects of Polybius' approach recall Herodotus' method and style, and there are some possible direct verbal and thematic echoes.[49] It is, therefore, very likely that Polybius himself knew well, and expected his educated Hellenistic readers to know well, such a pivotal and culturally resonant part of Herodotus' work as his representation of the Athenians' behaviour in 480–79 BC. Even if this were not the case, it would remain very likely that Polybius and his readers had access to Hellenistic accounts of the events of 480–79 BC strongly inspired by Herodotus' account, or deriving from the same cultural traditions which Herodotus had himself used: it would still be legitimate to use Herodotus' account as evidence for the kind of tradition about the Athenians of 480–79 BC with which Polybius was engaging in his representation of the Megalopolitan refugees.

Comparison with Lycurgus' and Herodotus' accounts shows what Polybius was reacting against in his emphasis on πίστις. In his account, Lycurgus makes 'love of country' the Athenian refugees' principal motivation in rejecting the Persian offer:

> (The Athenian refugees) at least all loved their country (ἐφίλουν τὴν πατρίδα πάντες) in such a way that they nearly stoned Alexander, the envoy of Xerxes, who had previously been their friend, because he came to ask for their surrender.[50]

In their speeches in Herodotus, the Athenians explain their refusal of the offer in terms of love of freedom, devotion to uncodified duty (θέμις) and commitment to the language, culture and religion with they share with their Greek allies:

> 'We also ourselves know that the power of the Mede is very many times greater than our power, so it is not necessary to chide us with that. But nonetheless, striving for freedom (ἐλευθερίης γλιχόμενοι), we will defend ourselves as far as we can. Do not try to persuade us to come to terms with the barbarian (ὁμολογῆσαι δὲ τῷ βαρβάρῳ); we will not obey. Now report to Mardonius that the Athenians say that, as long as the sun follows the same path as it now follows, we will not come to terms with Xerxes. But we will go on fighting, confident in the gods and heroes as our allies – the gods and heroes whose houses and statues he, having no respect

46 Compare Lycurg. *In Leocr*. 71 with Polyb. 2.61.5.
47 Compare Walbank (1972), 38, n. 30; Millar (1987), 13.
48 See Hornblower (2006), 314; McGing (2012), 33–4.
49 See Lehmann (1989–1990), 68, 74; McGing (2012).
50 Lycurg. *In Leocr.* 71.

> for them, burnt. Do not in the future come before the Athenians with words of this sort, nor seeming to do us good services advise us to commit acts contrary to duty (ἀθέμιστα ἔρδειν).'
>
> 'For there are many great factors preventing us from doing these things, even if we wanted to. First and foremost the statues and shrines of our gods which have been burnt and destroyed, which it is necessary for us to avenge to the greatest extent possible rather than coming to terms with the one who did these things. And also Greek identity, since we have the same blood and language, and common shrines of the gods and sacrifices and similar customs (τὸ Ἑλληνικόν, ἐὸν ὅμαιμόν τε καὶ ὁμόγλωσσον, καὶ θεῶν ἱδρύματά τε κοινὰ καὶ θυσίαι ἤθεά τε ὁμότροπα), to which it would not be good for the Athenians to become traitors (τῶν προδότας γενέσθαι Ἀθηναίους οὐκ ἂν εὖ ἔχοι).'[51]

Signally absent from both Lycurgus' and Herodotus' accounts of the Athenians' motivations and rhetoric is any reference to the Athenians' formal contractual obligations to their Greek allies, even though they had in fact exchanged λόγος (verbal agreement) and πίστις with them in 481 BC.[52] Neither author suggested that the Athenian refugees were motivated by their contractual obligations to their fellow Greeks, or that they should have been. Similarly, neither author suggested that the Athenian refugees drew attention to those contractual obligations in their rhetoric, or that they should have done. This was probably because Herodotus and Lycurgus suspected that adherence to formal contracts would appear a trifling or pedantic motivation or argument.[53]

The fact that πίστις is so strikingly missing in Herodotus' and Lycurgus' accounts, but emphasised with such polemical force by Polybius, is unlikely to be coincidental. Polybius probably intended to make clear that the Megalopolitan refugees' of 223 BC did not make the omission attributed to the Athenian refugees of 480–79 BC: they chose to preserve πίστις above all else. Whereas Herodotus' Athenian refugees were determined not to become 'traitors' (προδόται) to 'Greekness', a vague and indefinable quality, Polybius' Megalopolitan refugees did not betray (προδοῦναι) their good faith towards the Achaians, a precise and easily definable quality. A strong indication that Polybius wanted to invite a comparison is that he went on to claim that no action had been or ever would be 'finer' than the Megalopolitans' conduct: by implication, even the actions of the Athenian refugees of 480–79 BC as represented by Herodotus and Lycurgus, motivated by idealistic considerations of patriotism and virtue.

An important possible objection to this interpretation is that, in his Book XXXVIII, Polybius himself praises the Athenian refugees of 480–79 BC for making a fine decision (προαίρεσις) when they chose to remain loyal to the Greek cause.[54] However, the

51 Hdt. 8.143 and 144.

52 Hdt. 7.145.1.

53 In a possible parallel, [Dem.] 59.104 praises the Plataeans for having shown good-will (εὔνοια) to the Athenian people, not mere fidelity to the terms of their alliance, in refusing to abandon the Athenian alliance in 427, despite the resulting loss of their possessions, children and wives.

54 Polyb. 38.2.4–5.

nature of his praise for them there is consistent with the interpretation offered above. First, Polybius could have thought that the Athenian refugees themselves had, in fact, been motivated by a desire to preserve their contractual obligations, and that it was subsequent authors who had wrongly attributed to them more idealistic motivations. In that case, Polybius would have intended to imply in chapter 2.61 that the Megalopolitans of 223 BC emulated the actual behaviour of the Athenians of 480–79 BC, which was actually different in moral character from the picture presented in influential accounts. Nevertheless, there is also the second possibility that, despite his high opinion of the actual decision of the Athenians of 480–79 BC, Polybius thought that the Megalopolitans of 223 BC surpassed them in the moral qualities of their decision-making and action. In Book XXXVIII, Polybius does not represent the Athenian refugees consciously choosing to preserve πίστις: he uses the vague formulation that they chose to make common cause (κοινωνεῖν) with the other Greeks. Nor does he say that their decision-making could not be bettered. Polybius could thus have thought that the Athenians of 480–79 BC had made the morally correct decision, but not for the best possible reasons. He could have thought that the Megalopolitan refugees of 223 BC were superior in their moral reasoning: they consciously chose to preserve πίστις above all else.

2.2.3. The Wider Implications for Polybius' Ethical Thought: Emphasis on Πίστις as a Polemical Move

This interpretation of Polybius' presentation of the Megalopolitan refugees has wider implications for understanding Polybius' ethical thinking. It has been widely noted that Polybius was an advocate of the fundamental moral value for both states and individuals of preserving πίστις: good faith in making and keeping contracts, and possibly also in respecting other basic principles of fair play and strict reciprocity.[55] Polybius admires trustworthiness and good faith in political leaders: for example, he comments on Philopoemen's commitment to telling the truth, and the resulting trust (πίστις) in which his words were held by his fellow Achaians.[56] He also draws attention to the trustworthiness of figures lower down political hierarchies: he considers it worthy of note that a Seleucid garrison commander at Perge insisted on consulting Antiochos III before surrendering the polis. According to Polybius, this garrison commander justified his conduct through heavy emphasis on πίστις, saying that he had taken over his command 'on trust' (ἐν πίστει) and that he wanted to wait until instructions came from the man who had entrusted him with it (ἕως ἂν διασαφηθῇ πάλιν παρὰ τοῦ πιστεύσαντος τί δεῖ ποιεῖν).[57]

It is generally assumed that Polybius simply emphasised the importance of the preservation of πίστις in reaction against those who advocated narrow pursuit of self-interest,

55 Wunderer (1927), 16–17; Eckstein (1995), 68, 84–117; Champion (2004), 113.
56 Polyb. 11.10.4–6.
57 Polyb. 21.41.1–5.

for states and for individuals:[58] duplicity and bad faith are among the characteristics of lawless barbarians.[59] However, the example of Polybius' discussion of the behaviour of the Megalopolitan refugees shows that he was probably also reacting against alternative ethical views: he was probably reacting against the views of those who presented substantial relations, based on friendship (φιλία), shared culture or shared ethical standards, as morally superior to contractual bonds or other more limited and impersonal social bonds. He was probably also reacting against the views of those who regarded more substantial virtues, such as generosity, idealism, civic commitment, patriotism or piety, as morally superior to a disposition to preserve contracts and to observe principles of strict reciprocal justice.

Polybius can thus be seen as an advocate of a notion of 'limited' virtue. Preservation of good faith is not something pedantic, trivial or self-regarding, but the core of virtue. Indeed, no other type of action can be more admirable, even those which appear to involve greater contributions to the common good. Because the virtuous man gives priority to narrow πίστις within his moral outlook in this way, he punctiliously respects contracts, agreements, law and considerations of fair play, but does not necessarily engage in greater levels of self-sacrifice and co-operation with others; he is even disposed to treat the latter as less morally admirable than commonly thought.

It is true that Polybius is sometimes much vaguer in his ethical praise than in 2.61. For example, he commonly describes groups and individuals as 'fine' or 'noble' (καλός or καλὸς κἀγαθός)[60] or acts as fine,[61] without dry qualification. He also shows a significant interest in the traditional Greek virtues of courage (ἀνδρεία), self-control (σωφροσύνη) and discipline (εὐταξία).[62] He even praises T. Quinctius Flamininus for sparing no expense for the sake of the generic 'freedom' (ἐλευθερία) of the Greeks.[63]

Such usages, alongside other factors, form the basis of Champion's case that Polybius had a much more elevated, public-spirited notion of virtue: indeed, that his notion of virtue was similar to that against which he is here said to have been reacting. For example, Champion identifies 'reason, order, temperance and so on' as 'defining attributes of Hellenism' for Polybius, and elsewhere suggests that Polybius associated Hellenic virtue with special concern for the common good.[64]

It is true that Polybius was not entirely consistent in his moral outlook: he undoubtedly sometimes appeals to the more substantial notions of virtue emphasised by Champion. For example, he at one point very explicitly praises Scipio Africanus for the self-control and moderation he showed in refusing the offer of a gift of a young woman while he was serving as general,[65] even though, in this case, no formal restrictions or

58 E. g. Eckstein (1995), 20–25, 114.
59 See Champion (2004), e. g. 111, 113, 117.
60 See, for example, Polyb. 2.60.4–5; 27.15.2 (two examples among very many).
61 E. g. Polyb. 16.22a.7.
62 See, for example, Polyb. 6.48.4–6; 31.25.8.
63 Polyb. 18.46.14.
64 Champion (2004), 69, 122–4, 143.
65 Polyb. 10.19.3–7.

considerations of fair play and reciprocity barred him from accepting the gift. However, even Polybius' often admittedly elevated rhetoric about virtue and the common good is often not as substantial or far-reaching as it might appear. Since Polybius rarely defines the abstract terms he uses, it is quite plausible that he usually treated nobility, self-control and self-discipline as consisting principally in 'limited' virtue, often quite directly beneficial for the agent concerned, not in any greater level of altruism, solidarity or self-denial.

Polybius is twice explicit in closely associating nobility (καλοκἀγαθία) with πίστις.[66] Similarly, Flamininus' contribution to 'freedom', mentioned above, is precisely to uphold law, treaties and fair play: the Greek states are to have equal opportunities to seek to protect and further their interests on the Greek and wider Mediterranean diplomatic stages. In Book VI, duty (τὸ καθῆκον), justice (δικαιοσύνη) and the fine (τὸ καλόν) are at one point associated very closely with reciprocity, gratitude and requital of favours, rather than anything more self-sacrificing.[67] Polybius could even explicitly draw attention to the egoistic element of moral decision-making: in the Scipio example mentioned in the previous paragraph, Polybius surmises that Scipio's self-controlled decision-making was based on the thought that accepting the present of the young woman would be detrimental to his personal physical and mental capacity for action.[68]

Moreover, as Champion himself notes, even the Hellenic reason on which Champion places great emphasis is revealed, in the part of Book VI mentioned above, to include strongly prudential, even egoistic calculation as one of its important components. At an early stage in the cycle of constitutions, because men, unlike animals, have a share of understanding and reason (μόνοις αὐτοῖς μέτεστι νοῦ καὶ λογισμοῦ), individual men recognise that moral standards are in their own future self-interest. They see children not showing proper gratitude to their parents for their upbringing. They then begin to develop a sense of duty, 'considering the future and calculating that something very like this will happen to each of them' (προορωμένους τὸ μέλλον καὶ συλλογιζομένους ὅτι τὸ παραπλήσιον ἑκάστοις αὐτῶν συγκυρήσει) and also noting other cases of individuals defecting from reciprocal relationships.[69]

The main reason for accepting the view that Polybius favoured a controversial, 'limited' notion of virtue is, however, the nature of chapter 2.61 itself: it is one of the few places in which Polybius is explicit about the precise content of virtue and the moral hierarchy of different types of admirable conduct. It is, therefore, of very great significance that, in it, Polybius explicitly places on a pedestal a narrow, contractual notion of πίστις, subtly distinguishing himself from advocates of more substantial notions of virtue. He even uses the very kind of ethical vocabulary which might be thought more idealistic in other places: what could be 'finer' (κάλλιον) than the Megalopolitan refugees' conduct?

66 Polyb. 2.39.10; 7.11.9; compare 16.22a.6–7.
67 Polyb. 6.6.4–9.
68 Polyb. 10.19.5.
69 See Polyb. 6.6.4–7; compare Hahm (1995); Griffin (1996), 271; Champion (2004), 88.

2.3. The Political Significance of the Refugees' Behaviour

2.3.1. Polybius' Praise of the Second-Century BC Achaian League, in Hostile Dialogue with Aristotelian Ideas

Polybius' Megalopolitan refugees' conduct is also highly significant because they preserved πίστις, not merely with any allies, but with the Achaian League. Earlier in Book II, Polybius has already praised the second-century BC Achaian League as a highly admirable state, which lacks only a wall in order to qualify as a single pan-Peloponnesian polis:

> Concerning the Achaian nation and the Macedonian house it will be fitting to go back in time slightly, since in respect of the latter there has been a complete upheaval, and in respect of the Achaians, as I said above, there has been an unexpected expansion and coming together of minds during our period. After many tried in the past to bring the Peloponnesians to agreement, but no one was able to succeed because they did not make the effort for the sake of common freedom but for the sake of their own rule, there was so much progress and coming to fruition in our period in this respect that not only has a military and friendly alliance come into being among them (μὴ μόνον συμμαχικὴν καὶ φιλικὴν κοινωνίαν γεγονέναι πραγμάτων περὶ αὐτούς), but they also use the same laws, weights and measures and coinage, and also the same magistrates, councillors and judges, and overall the only thing missing for almost the whole Peloponnese to have the form of a single polis is a wall encircling all the inhabitants (καθόλου δὲ τούτῳ μόνῳ διαλλάττειν τοῦ μὴ μιᾶς πόλεως διάθεσιν ἔχειν σχεδὸν τὴν σύμπασαν Πελοπόννησον, τῷ μὴ τὸν αὐτὸν περίβολον ὑπάρχειν τοῖς κατοικοῦσιν αὐτήν); all others things both at the federal level and in individual poleis are the same and very similar.[70]

In his praise of the Achaian League at this point, Polybius presents it as a positive paradigm of what may be called a 'limited' polis, by analogy with the notion of 'limited' virtue introduced above. In a 'limited' polis, civic institutions are not designed to forge a close-knit community of citizens devoted to the common good and shared ideals, by extensively educating citizens in substantial standards of virtue. Rather, civic institutions are designed principally to regulate and constrain, mainly through incentives and deterrents, the competitive interactions of citizens as they already are, self-interested and disunited. 'Limited' civic institutions may play some educational role, but only in inculcating 'limited' virtue and maintaining the political *status quo*. In such a 'limited' polis, it is only 'limited' virtue which is required of citizens, and promoted by civic institutions.

The evidence for this 'limited polis' interpretation is that, when Polybius describes the features of the Achaian League which allow it almost to qualify as a polis, he does

70 Polyb. 2.37.7–11.

not mention civic unity or educational and cultural institutions designed to foster virtue and unity. Rather, he mentions institutions designed to enable efficient political, commercial and legal interactions across the whole Peloponnese among citizens who consistently bargain with one another and become involved in disputes: 'the same laws, weights and measures and coinage, and also the same magistrates, councillors and judges'. Similarly, when he subsequently praises the 'democratic' qualities of the League, including its good treatment of new members, he does not suggest any fusion of member-states into a new community, distinguished by internal solidarity and unity in its approach to political, social and ethical questions. On the contrary, he stresses free speech (both ἰσηγορία and παρρησία) and the fact that all members, both old and new, stand on an equal footing.[71]

The impression created is of a League whose political rules and institutions enable free, fair political competition and bargaining between member-states and citizens who preserve their own political aims, preferences and projects. Polybius himself subsequently makes it explicit that he thinks it legitimate for member states to pursue their self-interest determinedly. The relevant passage is his discussion of the response of the member poleis of Dyme, Pharai and Tritaia to the careless failure of the League general to come to their aid against the Aetolians in the Social War: they decided to cease paying their contributions to the League and to hire their own mercenary army. Polybius' moral judgement of their decision is that they were justified in hiring the army, but not in stopping their contributions: they were quite entitled to look out for their own interests, but, since they were prosperous, they should have continued to observe their obligations towards the League (ἐχρῆν γὰρ τὴν μὲν ἰδίαν χρείαν μὴ παραλιπεῖν, εὐκαιροῦντάς γε δὴ καὶ δυναμένους, τὰ δὲ πρὸς τὴν κοινὴν πολιτείαν δίκαια συντηρεῖν). This was not least because they would easily have gained a positive return on their contributions.[72]

Significantly, the view that regulated bargaining and competition between citizens are a legitimate, or even desirable, feature of the good constitution is also evident elsewhere in Polybius' work: as Lintott and Hahm have shown, Polybius praises the Roman constitution as a dynamic, conflictual political system, involving elements of democracy, aristocracy and monarchy, whose political life is based on wide-ranging bargaining and give-and-take.[73] It is important for the functioning of the system that the different institutions and magistrates are able to counteract one another (within peaceful bounds).[74] Polybius even claims at one point that the Roman system functions well because the different institutions have the capacity both to assist *and to harm* one another (τὸ καὶ βλάπτειν καὶ συνεργεῖν ἀλλήλοις).[75] This view is also consistent with Polybius' more theoretical view, mentioned above, that moral standards originate in human society from

71 Polyb. 2.38.6–9.
72 Polybius 4.60, quotation from 4.60.10.
73 Lintott (1997), 78–9; Hahm (2009), 193–6.
74 See Polyb. 6.15.1; 17.9.
75 Polyb. 6.18.1

the egoistic calculations of men eager to ensure that principles of strict reciprocity are enforced, something which is in their own future individual interests.[76]

In his representation of the Achaian League as a political system, as in his representation of the Megalopolitans in 223 BC, Polybius was probably reacting against traditional Greek idealistic, community-oriented thinking. As I hope to argue elsewhere, his praise of the second-century Achaian League as almost a polis can be seen as a direct attack on Aristotelian utopian thinking about the nature of a true polis,[77] which Polybius could have encountered in Aristotle's *Politics* or in derivative works by Hellenistic Peripatetics.[78] Aristotle had sharply differentiated poleis from mere alliances, at one point taking Polybius' home ἔθνος, the Arcadians, as his example of the latter: an alliance exists merely to satisfy the basic needs of members, and thus has little internal variety or complexity, whereas a true polis is a complex community, united through education in pursuit of the collective aim of ensuring the good life of virtue for all members.[79] Probably in a conscious repudiation of Aristotle's sharp dichotomy, Polybius boldly claims that the second-century Achaian League was not only an alliance *but also* very nearly a polis, lacking only a circuit wall.[80] Even this qualification itself probably represents a reaction against Aristotelian thinking: Aristotle had claimed that the whole Peloponnese could not be a single polis, even if surrounded by a single wall.[81]

Overall, therefore, Polybius used his praise of the Achaian League to suggest, in an anti-Aristotelian vein, that an excellent political system need not be qualitatively different from a complex alliance: it is simply necessary that it should reinforce and extend the types of 'limited' institutions, designed to channel and regulate self-interest and competition, characteristic of such an alliance. Such a political system, unlike an Aristotelian polis, can easily be extended over a very wide geographical area, encompassing disparate members without a common culture or educational system.

Polybius' scepticism about the Aristotelian polis reveals an approach similar to that evident in his dismissal of the political system of Plato's *Republic* in Book VI as not worthy of discussion within his examination of constitutions, because never implemented in practice. Although Polybius is formally neutral at this point about the intrinsic merits of Plato's ethical and political ideas, his language does convey scepticism or even hostility. He begins by saying that it is just to exclude Plato's *Republic* even though philosophers 'hymn' (ἐξυμνοῦσι) it, a disparaging description of Plato's supporters which implies misplaced and tedious enthusiasm. Moreover, Polybius' subsequent emphasis on the fact that Plato's ideal constitution has never been tried in practice probably carries the

76 See Polyb. 6.6.4–7.

77 For Polybius' engagement with Aristotelian thinking at this point, compare von Scala (1890), 134; Lehmann (2001), 58–60.

78 For an argument that the second-century BC Peripatos was quite vibrant, see Hahm (2007).

79 See Arist. *Pol*. 1261a22–9 (mentioning the Arcadians); 1263b36–7; 1280a31–1280b35.

80 Polyb. 2.37.7–11, printed above.

81 Arist. *Pol*. 1276a24–7. Walbank (1957–1979), vol. I, *ad* 2.37.11, notes that Polybius' comment here looks like a response to Aristotle, but expresses scepticism that Polybius knew the *Politics*.

implication that any such attempt would be unworkable: Plato's ideal city stands to actual cities as a lifeless statue stands to living men.[82]

The comparison with Polybius' expressed attitude towards Plato's political ideas shows that Polybius was hostile to far more in traditional Greek thinking than simply Aristotle's ideas: he took issue with a whole line of thought, strongly idealistic and community-oriented, which had long been dominant in Greek political philosophy, and very prominent in Greek political rhetoric. However, it remains very likely that, in the particular case of his analysis of the Achaian League, Polybius wished to convey particular dissatisfaction with some of Aristotle's ideas about the criteria for true polis status.

It is true that Polybius does sometimes use rhetoric which suggests that there existed some degree of solidarity and fellow-feeling between second-century League members, beyond mutual respect for law, procedures and justice.[83] Some such rhetoric should probably be interpreted as evidence that Polybius highly valued certain distinct types of political fellow-feeling,[84] but other examples dissolve on closer inspection into reaffirmations of 'limited' ideals.[85] In any case, the emphasis in Polybius' account of the second-century Achaian League falls on the rule of law and procedure, equality, justice and freedom of speech, not on demanding ideals of civic solidarity and ethical education.

2.3.2. The Megalopolitan Refugees as Good Achaian Citizens

In this context, the Megalopolitan refugees' preservation of πίστις with their allies in the Achaian League can be seen as a particularly complex political paradigm in Polybius' work. Their preservation of πίστις in desperate circumstances symbolises the strong relations of good faith holding the League together, the basis of the League's evolution into a quasi-polis by the second century.[86]

Πίστις at the quasi-civic or federal level must have been impersonal and contractual: the Megalopolitan refugees would not even have met, let alone developed political friendship (φιλία) with, most of those with whom they preserved πίστις. Polybius presents their behaviour as a moral *exemplum* demonstrating that 'sharing' is good; but this was not sharing of common meals, or of common values, but 'sharing of true and firm business' (ἀληθινῶν πραγμάτων καὶ βεβαίων κοινωνία).

As Polybius presents their position, the Megalopolitans did not necessarily have the same substantive culture, interests and values as their Achaian allies, individually or as a federation. Nevertheless, they did share a commitment to upholding procedures and resulting decisions, such as votes of alliance, and to associated 'procedural virtues', such as dispositions to be honest and 'firm' in making and keeping formal commit-

82 See Polyb. 6.47.7–10.
83 Cf. Champion (2004), 122–4.
84 Compare section 4.2 below, on League members' 'humanity' (φιλανθρωπία).
85 Walbank (1957–1979), vol. I, *ad* 2.42.6 (on the rhetoric of Achaian ὁμόνοια).
86 Compare Polyb. 2.39.10, for Polybius' own attribution of πίστις to the fourth-century BC Achaians.

ments. Polybius' polemical engagement with the Athenians of 480–79 BC is probably again relevant: in Polybius' view, it was, paradoxically, the Achaian League, not any attempted political incarnation of the unified 'Greek' cultural community appealed to by the Athenians,[87] which slowly took on the unity associated with a polis, but on a larger scale.

As well as being relevant to the Megalopolitans' relationship with the Achaian League, this type of argument applies to internal relations within the Megalopolitan citizen body. As a self-standing civic community, they showed less solidarity than required by traditional Greek idealistic notions about the good polis. The shared notion of πίστις around which Polybius presents the Megalopolitan refugees rallying was a precisely defined and rather dry type of morally admirable action, not some more vague and emotive conception of praiseworthy action. In choosing to reject Cleomenes' offer, they gave priority to this 'fidelity to allies' over the recovery of their 'ancestral graves', 'shrines' and 'homeland'. They thus no longer treated their community as purely an integrated descent group and cultic community, inhabiting a homeland. Rather, they recognised that these features of their community were normatively subordinate in this context to its political and legal status as an ally of the Achaians.

As I hope to argue in another article, there are strong generic affinities between Polybius' ethical and political outlook and that of contemporary Romans and Middle Stoics: for example, Polybius' interest in πίστις and its political significance recalls Roman emphasis on *fides* as a political virtue, closely connected with justice.[88] A more specific overlap with some Roman political thinking about the nature of a *res publica* is also detectable here. In his *De Re Publica*, Cicero portrays Scipio Aemilianus, a close associate of Polybius at Rome, arguing that the occupation of a settlement with the physical attributes of a city is not sufficient for a community to qualify as a *res publica*: the state must be genuinely a 'thing of the people', not the possession of an individual tyrant or faction. Athens under the Thirty Tyrants had a gymnasium, theatre, portico and propylaia, but it was not a *res publica*. Cicero then makes Scipio and Laelius argue that neither is an extreme democracy a *res publica*: it lacks the distinguishing feature of being held together by a *consensus iuris* (i. e. agreement about law or right or justice).[89]

Polybius' discussion of the Megalopolitan refugees represents a practical application of this type of philosophical problem, which Cicero may have had good reason to regard as one of the historical Scipio's concerns. The Megalopolitans had refused to return to their home city, with its shrines and graves, since this would have been in contravention of a formal contract and of justice. Paradoxically, therefore, it was by staying in exile, and being deprived of the physical institutions of their city, that they continued to satisfy the conditions for a *res publica* or polis, bound together by a consensus about fulfilling the obligations of law, contracts and justice. Moreover, as argued above, by staying in exile, they remained part of the quasi-polis of the Achaian League, bound

87 Hdt. 8.144.2; cf. Polyb. 38.2.4.

88 See, for example, Cic. *De Re Publica* 1.2; 2.26; *Off.* 1.23.

89 Cic. *De Re Publica* 3.43–5; for full discussion, see Schofield (1999a), ch. 10.

together through contractual relations between member poleis. If they had returned to their city, they would have ceased to be a legitimate polity, both because they would have lacked internal consensus about *ius* and because they would no longer have belonged to the federal structure.[90]

Overall, therefore, in addition to its more general ethical resonance, Polybius' representation of the Megalopolitan refugees of the 220s BC serves as a striking paradigm of 'limited' political virtues and relationships. Polybius, an exile based in Rome, praised heroic exiles from his home polis from an earlier generation, not for patriotism, solidarity or commitment to high ideals, but for showing scrupulous contractual loyalty to their allies in the Achaian League, the kind of attitude which was to allow the Achaian League to become a thoroughly integrated federal state by his own time. It is as if a modern French liberal democrat, himself in exile in the United States of America, were to reimagine the Free French of the Second World War, not as a close-knit group of patriots in solidarity with one another, determined to uphold shared French ideals against an unequivocal evil, but as a group of punctilious exiles showing strict contractual loyalty to fellow liberal European states, of the kind which was to underpin the future European Union.

2.4. Polybius' Account of the Megalopolitans' Subsequent Fortunes

Polybius' account of the Megalopolitan refugees' subsequent fortunes confirms his preference for 'limited' civic virtue and political institutions and methods. In evidence that he thought that preservation of πίστις and respect for 'limited' political institutions brings practical rewards,[91] Polybius goes on to recount, later in Book II and towards the end of Book V, how the refugees' preservation of faith with the Achaian League and their own 'Achaian' virtues led to their survival of the misfortunes of exile and to their subsequent recovery. First, those qualities enabled them to fight alongside the Achaians (and Macedonians) in defeating Cleomenes at Sellasia in 222 BC.[92] Second, they helped them to overcome the bitter disputes which arose in their city after its refoundation.

When they returned to their homeland after Sellasia, the Megalopolitans were divided about the allocation of scarce resources. Another cause of division was the possibility of scaling back the size of their territory or admitting new citizens in order to make it more

90 Compare the attitude evident (again, a Roman attitude) in Hadrian's letter to Naryx of AD 138 (*SEG* 51.641, with 56.565; Jones (2006), text pp. 151–2). Hadrian confirms that Naryx, whose status as a polis has clearly been questioned, is indeed a polis. He argues that Naryx qualifies as a polis, not only because it possesses particular internal institutions (ll. 13–15) and cultural distinctions (ll. 16–20), but also because it is part of various multilateral organisations (ll. 9–12, 15–16: the Delphic Amphictyony, the Boeotian League, the Panhellenion and the province of Achaia are mentioned).

91 On Polybius' more general emphasis on the fundamental role of political institutions in historical causation, compare Ferrary (1988), 271–2.

92 Polyb. 2.65–70.

easily defensible. Polybius presents this post-return civil unrest (στάσις) as a result of rationally explicable processes: shortage of resources and disagreements between rich and poor. He does not present it as a result of capricious divine intervention or the onset of political 'madness' or disease, which Loraux has shown to be the more common Greek approach to the causes of στάσις from the Classical period onwards.[93] Rather than presenting them as gripped by frenzy, Polybius claims that the Megalopolitans preserved their distinctive 'spirits' (τοῖς μὲν γὰρ φρονήμασιν ἔμενον)[94] in the course of these disputes. It was thus not contrary to the ethos of the Megalopolitans, as Polybius understood it, for citizens to possess and assert conflicting interests: their ethos merely served to shape the way in which conflicting Megalopolitan citizens interacted with one another. Megalopolitan citizens were not united by Aristotelian-style civic friendship (φιλία), but by respect for procedure and fair play.

The intervention of the Peripatetic philosopher Prytanis of Karystos, sent by Antigonus Doson to write a new law code for Megalopolis, succeeded only in provoking further strife.[95] Prytanis was not merely any Peripatetic, but 'one of the most distinguished'. This section of Polybius' work thus provides a further passage in which Polybius' distrust of idealistic, strongly community-centred notions found expression in hostility towards Aristotle and contemporary Peripatetics: in Polybius' view, a Peripatetic philosopher's law code did nothing to resolve socio-economic tensions in his home city.

By contrast, the Achaian general Aratus of Sikyon did achieve a resolution of the disputes: Polybius probably hoped that readers would interpret this as an example of Aratus' more general ability, praised in Book IV, to handle political disputes 'mildly'.[96] However, Aratus did not achieve this end through his personal virtue or charisma: rather, he reconciled the Megalopolitans through a decree of the Achaian League, κατὰ τὸ τῶν Ἀχαιῶν δόγμα.[97] In Polybius' view, therefore, it was the fair decision-making procedures of the Achaian League, not the intervention of a Peripatetic philosopher, which resolved the internal disputes of the Megalopolitans. Having earlier kept their part of the bargain by respecting their treaty obligations, the Megalopolitans now benefited from the regulatory structures of the League. In Polybius' view, it was 'limited' regulation of citizen relations, involving supervision of bargaining and enforcement of a compromise, which could achieve stability in a citizen body.

93 Loraux (2001), esp. 22, 25. Cf. Hornblower (1991–2008), vol. I, *ad* Thuc. 3.82.1.
94 Polyb. 5.93.3.
95 Polyb. 5.93.8.
96 Polyb. 4.8.1: Aratus was able to 'bear political disputes mildly' (ἐνεγκεῖν τὰς πολιτικὰς διαφορὰς πρᾴως).
97 Polyb. 5.93.1.

3. Polybius' Probable Presentation of the Spartan exiles at Compasion in 188 BC

3.1. Background

As suggested in the introduction, it is probable that Polybius presented another group of Peloponnesian exiles as a paradigmatic foil to the Megalopolitan refugees. The relevant section is his mainly lost account of the behaviour of the Spartan exiles whom Philopoemen led into Spartan territory, at the head of his army, in the spring of 188 BC. These exiles probably comprised both 'old exiles' (longstanding exiles from the tyrants of Sparta, expelled before 192 BC) and more recent pro-Achaian exiles.[98] In accordance with a treaty between the Romans, Achaians and Spartans, the exiles had been living in coastal settlements south of Gytheion. The incumbent Spartans, anxious to regain access to the sea, had violated the relevant treaty by attacking the exile settlement at Las. As a result, the Achaian League voted for war with Sparta. Philopoemen led his army, including the Spartan exiles, into Spartan territory. Philopoemen then invited those responsible for the attack on Las to surrender themselves, in exchange for a guarantee of a fair trial. Livy's account of the sequel to these events is as follows:

> hi uenientibus Lacedaemoniis ad portam castrorum agmine facto occurrerunt; et primo lacessere iurgiis, deinde, altercatione orta, cum accenderentur irae, ferocissimi exulum impetum in Lacedaemonios fecerunt. cum illi deos et fidem legatorum testarentur, et legati et praetor summouere turbam et protegere Lacedaemonios uinclaque iam quosdam inicientis arcere, crescebat tumultu concitato turba; et Achaei ad spectaculum primo concurrebant; deinde uociferantibus exulibus, quae passi forent, et orantibus opem adfirmantibusque simul numquam talem occasionem habituros, si eam praetermisissent; foedus, quod in Capitolio, quod Olympiae, quod in arce Athenis sacratum fuisset, irritum per illos esse; priusquam alio de integro foedere obligarentur, noxios puniendos esse, accensa his uocibus multitudo ad uocem unius, qui, ut ferirent, inclamauit, saxa coniecit. atque ita decem septem, quibus uincula per tumultum iniecta erant, interfecti sunt. sexaginta tres postero die comprehensi, a quibus praetor uim arcuerat, non quia saluos uellet, sed quia perire causa indicta nolebat, obiecti multitudini iratae, cum auersis auribus pauca locuti essent, damnati omnes et traditi sunt ad supplicium.[99]
>
> When the Spartans [i. e. the suspects] came to the gate of the camp, the exiles met them drawn up in battle formation; and at first they attacked them with insults, then, when a dispute arose and anger was ignited, the most ferocious of the exiles made an attack on the Spartans. When they [i. e. the Spartan suspects] called to witness the gods and the pledge of the envoys, and the legates and the praetor were trying to restrain the crowd, protect the Spartans and hold back some who were already putting chains on them, the uproar became heated and the crowd grew. And first

98 Briscoe (2008), *ad* 38.30.6.
99 Livy 38.33.6–11.

> the Achaeans rushed together for the spectacle; then the exiles, clamouring over the wrongs which they had suffered and imploring their help, maintained that they would never have such an opportunity again if they let it pass now. A treaty which had been sanctioned on the Capitol, in Olympia and on the Athenian acropolis had been void rendered by their opponents. Before they were bound again by another treaty, the guilty men had to be punished. The crowd, excited by these words, at the voice of one who shouted 'Strike!', started throwing stones. And in this way seventeen men, who had been chained up during the turmoil, were killed. Sixty-three men whom the praetor had protected from violence (not because he wished them to be rescued, but because he did not want them to die without a trial) were arrested the following day. They were exposed to the furious crowd, and after they said a few things to averted ears, they were all condemned and handed over for punishment.

The only way in which to reconstruct Polybius' account of the Spartan exiles' behaviour is to use this surviving passage of Livy's narrative. This is, admittedly, a speculative undertaking, quite different in nature from the project attempted in the previous section. However, an attempt is made below to show that the reconstruction offered is the most plausible one possible, taking into account Livy's text, the surviving fragment of Polybius' underlying text, Polybius' wider writings and ideas, a previous author's representation of Spartan exiles and the second-century BC Peloponnesian political context.

3.2. The Spartan Exiles as a Dystopian Paradigm

3.2.1. Polybius' Polemical Purposes

Livy himself presents the whole Compasion episode as evidence of Achaian arrogant abuse of power.[100] However, it is clear from the surviving fragment of Polybius' own text[101] that Polybius' own account was a polemical defence of Philopoemen. It was probably a response to the rival tradition, recorded by Plutarch,[102] that Philopoemen was himself responsible for the summary justice.

The details of Livy's narrative can, unlike Livy's interpretations, be fairly confidently attributed to Polybius. For example, Plutarch says that Polybius wrote that 80 Spartans were killed at Compasion, whereas the Spartan Aristocrates said that 350 were killed, and Livy uses Polybius' lower figure.[103] The case of Livy's representation of events at Compasion therefore fits well into a pattern which Levene has identified as pervasive in Livy's history: Livy alludes very closely to Polybius' text, but, precisely in doing so,

100 Livy 38.32.10.
101 Polyb. 21.32c.
102 Plut. *Phil*. 16. This version may have been preserved in Spartan tradition and historiography (e. g. in the work of the historian Aristocrates, used by Plutarch: Plut. *Phil*. 16.4).
103 Plut. *Phil*. 16.4; Livy 38.33.10–11.

seeks to call into question the validity of Polybius' judgements, especially his fundamental judgements about causation and responsibility.[104] Nevertheless, Livy did not entirely suppress the features of the episode on which Polybius' own interpretation probably relied. On the contrary, some of the details of Livy's account give indications of the rhetorical strategy adopted by Polybius to exonerate, and even to praise, Philopoemen.

First, signs can be identified in Livy's narrative that Polybius, in the underlying passage, stressed Philopoemen's positive 'Achaian' attributes: Philopoemen made the invasion of Lacedaemonian territory in response to a Spartan infringement of the treaty, promised the Spartan culprits a fair hearing if they surrendered themselves, and strove to ensure that they did in fact receive a fair hearing. Such a presentation would have been strongly consistent with Polybius' representation of Philopoemen elsewhere: as Ferrary has shown, Polybius represents Philopoemen as an excellent statesman, who saw the moral and pragmatic importance of insisting on the letter of the law and formal agreements, especially in connection with relations between the Achaian League and Rome.[105]

An account demonstrating Philopoemen's impeccable 'limited' virtue would also have complemented well the moralising remarks preserved in the surviving fragment of Polybius' account of this whole episode. Usually, Polybius says, the immediately beneficial (τὸ παραυτίκα λυσιτελές) and the fine (τὸ καλόν) are in conflict with each other: a remark compatible with Polybius' fundamental moral conviction that fine action is by its nature in the long-term, enlightened self-interest of human agents.[106] In this case, however, Philopoemen achieved the unusual feat of reconciling (συνάγειν καὶ συναρμόζειν πρὸς ἄλληλα) the advantageous and the fine: an excellent demonstration of the essence of 'limited' virtue, the intelligent, structured pursuit of self-interest in a reasonable way, sensitive to rules, agreements and principles of fair play.[107]

Second, the details of Livy's account suggest that Polybius shifted the blame for the massacre and summary justice on to the Spartan exiles. As Briscoe shows, Livy himself complicates the picture: he implies that non-Spartan members of the Achaian army were involved in the unrest.[108] Livy's implication here contradicts the subsequent claim of Polybius' father Lykortas, in a speech probably derived from Polybius, that Spartans, not Achaians, had killed Spartans.[109] It is, however, probable that Polybius himself assigned the blame to the Spartans: it is unlikely that he would have represented his own father, a sympathetic political figure in his work, manipulating facts so tendentiously.

104 See Levene (2010), esp. 147–63.
105 Ferrary (1988), 296–8, discussing Polyb. 24.11–13; compare Champion (2004), 155.
106 Compare Polyb. 6.6.4–7.
107 Polyb. 21.32c.
108 See Briscoe (2008), *ad* 38.33.10, noting the two uses of the word *multitudo* in close proximity.
109 See Livy 39.36.15–16.

3.2.2. The Spartan Exiles at Compasion as a Dystopian Paradigm

Part of Polybius' rhetorical strategy for transferring the blame to the Spartan exiles was probably to suggest that they showed ethical and political tendencies which were the inverse of the admirable tendencies shown by the Megalopolitan exiles of 223 BC. The probability that Polybius treated the two episodes as antithetical moral paradigms is reinforced by the fact that Polybius made his explicit abstract comments about the relationship between the fine and the beneficial in connection with the Compasion episode,[110] comparable to his abstract remarks about the fine and good faith in relation to the behaviour of the Megalopolitan refugees.

Moreover, the precise contrasts between the Megalopolitans' conduct and that of the Spartan exiles, as represented by Livy, are themselves sufficiently striking to support the view that Polybius shaped his two accounts in order to make them revealing counterparts to each other. First, the Megalopolitans cited a formal treaty as a reason for them not to return to their homes, whereas the Spartan exiles cited a formal treaty as part of their attempt to achieve an immediate return to their homes with their opponents removed. In other words, the Megalopolitans recognised a treaty as a check on their self-interest, whereas the Spartan exiles cited a treaty as a justification of their pursuit of their undeclared self-interest. Second, the Megalopolitans preserved their contractual obligations as a whole, whereas the Spartans were selective: they ignored the assurances which had been given to the Spartan prisoners, and denied the prisoners a trial before punishment. Third, the Megalopolitans were united in opposition to their enemies, the Spartans, whereas the Spartan exiles' hostility was directed against their fellow Spartans. Fourth, the Megalopolitans 'almost stoned' the Spartan envoys, but in the end used their stones, actually or metaphorically, to vote for the preservation of the Achaian alliance, whereas the Spartans actually stoned their fellow Spartans: the Megalopolitans voted with stones, the Spartans voted by stoning.

Polybius could have intended these contrasts to suggest a straightforward dichotomy between morally respectable, self-controlled Achaians and self-interested, unrestrained Spartans. However, there are good reasons for thinking that Polybius used these contrasts to suggest a more subtle point: the Spartans were led into discord and fanaticism, not purely by self-interest, but also by flawed ethical and cultural values and habits.

Polybius had represented the Megalopolitan refugees as unanimous only to a limited extent: they collectively endorsed principles of contractual good faith, and reverted to regulated conflict after returning to Megalopolis. By contrast, he probably represented the Spartan exiles at Compasion achieving, within their own faction, a far more substantial form of civic unity: they behaved 'with one spirit' (ὁμοθυμαδόν), achieving ὁμόνοια ('one-mindedness') in enthusiastic endorsement of absolute, unqualified ethical rhetoric and distinctions, which went far beyond 'limited' insistence on contractual entitlements.

In Livy's text, the Spartan exiles were roused, together with their supporters in the Achaian army, to throw stones by the cry of one man (*ad vocem unius, qui ut ferirent*

110 Polyb. 21.32c, discussed above.

inclamavit): *one* individual could express the will of the *multitudo*, a clear sign that the group was acting ὁμοθυμαδόν or in ὁμόνοια. There is a parallel in a surviving part of Polybius' text for unanimous stoning as a symptom of acute divisions within a citizen body: Polybius claims that, in 169 BC, in the context of recriminations about responsibility for Aetolian disloyalty to Rome, the Aetolian politician Pantaleon provoked the Aetolian assembly to 'unanimously stone' (βάλλειν ὁμοθυμαδόν)[111] his rival, Thoas. This caused the Roman envoys present to leave depart the assembly, leaving Aetolian affairs consumed in mutual suspicion and complete disorder (ἐν ὑποψίαις καὶ ταραχαῖς ὁλοσχερέσιν). In this case, dogmatic ethical claims were central to Pantaleon's rhetoric: he had accused his own accuser, Lykiskos, of flattering the Romans 'shamelessly and slavishly' (ἀναισχύντως καὶ ἀνελευθέρως), and accused Thoas himself of personal ingratitude.[112] It is probable that Polybius presented the Spartan exiles who spoke at Compasion prompting the stoning using similarly dogmatic rhetoric. Indeed, in Livy's account, those exiles had built up an argument for decisive, united action which culminated in a dogmatic ethical claim, evoking uncodified standards of vice and culpability: the claim that the 'guilty' suspects should be punished (*noxios puniendos esse*).

Admittedly, the argument of the leading exiles which yielded enthusiastic unity was partly consistent with Polybius' own ethical standards: it partly relied on appeal to a formal treaty. However, the details preserved in Livy's account suggest that Polybius could well have implied that they had a deficient conception of the contractual entitlements and obligations which they did recognise. In Livy's account, the exiles presented their allegation that the suspects had contravened a treaty in such a way as to imply that they were defending a moral and religious absolute, not advocating their own legitimate particular interests. First, they claimed that the treaty, not their rights under it, had gone 'void' (*irritum*). Second, they implied that it was the ratification of the treaty at places of great religious importance ('on the Capitol, at Olympia and on the Athenian acropolis'), not simply its character as a formal contract to which both they and the suspects had voluntarily given assent, which gave it its force.[113]

The exiles thus implied that the immediate punishment of the Spartan suspects was a crucial means of preserving the good ethical, political and religious order of things, not merely of upholding particular entitlements. In this respect, the Spartan exiles resembled the Athenian refugees of 480–79 BC, as represented by Herodotus and Lycurgus. Polybius does elsewhere offer a paradigm of a more appropriate way of advancing a claim

111 Polybius also thought that there were more positive ways of behaving ὁμοθυμαδόν: for example, the citizens of Corcyra put themselves under Roman protection ὁμοθυμαδόν (Polyb. 2.11.5).

112 Polyb. 28.4.9–13.

113 Admittedly, Polybius himself elsewhere presents contractual obligations with religious sanction as having particular moral force (Polyb. 4.17.9–11). However, he makes clear in that passage that the swearers had obligations to those with whom they exchanged pledges as well as to the gods (4.17.11). He thus did not downplay the moral importance of individuals' legitimate particular interests. Moreover, he was not there advocating the breaking of some contractual obligations in favour of other 'higher' contractual obligations.

that one's rights under a treaty have been infringed. In his account of the aftermath in Greece of the Battle of Cynoscephalae, Polybius at one point presents certain Aetolians claiming in a 'gentle and civilised way' (πρᾴως καὶ πολιτικῶς) before a representative of the Romans that their treaty rights have not been honoured. He contrasts them with other speakers in the same Aetolian assembly who simply engaged in abuse (τῶν δὲ λοιδορούντων) and claimed credit for Roman successes in Greece.[114]

Another important fact about the unanimity of the Spartan exiles at Compasion is that, according to Livy, they were also unanimous in endorsing a positive repudiation of a contractual constraint on their behaviour: they were roused by the argument that they should act decisively to punish 'the guilty' before they were themselves 'bound by another treaty'. In Polybius' underlying account, this detail probably symbolised the exiles' deficient attitude to formal contracts: here, as in their disregard for the assurances given to the prisoners, they treated such agreements as an undesirable check on free political and ethical judgement, not as the indispensable basis of civilised life. More generally, this unanimous aspiration to avoid the constraints of 'another treaty', a symptom of the exiles' wider aspiration to determine their own fate through immediate collective action, could well have symbolised the traditional concern of citizens of a Greek or Peloponnesian polis to secure their own polis' freedom at all costs: a quite different mindset from the co-operative, peaceful one attributed by Polybius to the member-states of the second-century Achaian League.[115]

Overall, therefore, it is very probable that Polybius presented the Megalopolitan and Spartan exiles as contrasting ethical and political paradigms. The Megalopolitan refugees self-consciously sacrificed all to preserve πίστις with their fellow federal quasi-citizens. This was not only highly praiseworthy, but also beneficial for them in the long term: it was their loyalty to the Achaian League, and respect for agreements, law and procedure, which enabled them quickly to recover from their brief period of collective destitution, as members of a stable polis within a thriving federal state. The Spartan exiles, by contrast, neglected the requirements of πίστις, procedure and law in favour of more unreliable ethical and political imperatives: those of collective spiritedness, unanimity, ethical purity, direct action, collective self-determination and uncodified notions of justice, virtue and the good. Polybius probably meant to imply that observance of these imperatives led the Spartan exiles into partisan fanaticism. First, it required them to conceive of themselves, and to act, as an undifferentiated collectivity, instinctively sharing thoughts and impulses. They could most easily achieve this by behaving as a close-knit, exclusive partisan faction, bitterly opposed to their natural allies, their fellow Spartan citizens. Second, observance of these imperatives obliged them to present their unifying interest, in fact a partisan one, as consistent with substantive ethical, political and religious standards: they were preserving unquestionable standards of justice and order against unambiguous traitors and vicious men.

114 Polyb. 18.48.7–8.
115 Compare Polyb. 2.38.6–9.

3.2.3. The Spartan Exiles and Lycurgan Ideals

It was probably not coincidental that the exiles were Spartans: Polybius could well have used this example to suggest that aspects of traditional Spartan ideology, that associated with the legendary Spartan lawgiver Lycurgus, had devastating effects in practice.[116] For one thing, he probably represented the exiles revealing certain stereotypical Spartan habits of character. First, Livy claims that, even though hostilities had been formally suspended while the Spartan suspects came to give an account of themselves, the Spartan exiles approached them in battle formation (*agmine facto*): this recalls the all-consuming militarism associated with Lycurgan Sparta.[117] Second, Livy says that some of the 'most ferocious' exiles attacked the suspects physically, while others addressed the subsequent informal assembly in a desperate, inflammatory manner (*uociferantibus exulibus*, *orantibus opem*), not through the measured rhetoric which Polybius would have associated with an Achaian political meeting. This recalls stereotypical Spartan spiritedness.[118] Third, the Spartan exiles' reluctance to engage in further negotiations before taking action recalls the stereotypical Spartan preference for readiness for bold action over facility with words.[119]

In addition, the type of close-knit unity and ὁμόνοια achieved by the Spartan exiles, which made them act ὁμοθυμαδόν in pursuit of uncodified supposed moral absolutes and collective freedom, recalls certain political ideals associated with Lycurgan Sparta. Polybius himself identifies ὁμόνοια as an aim and product of Lycurgus' reforms.[120] Xenophon's account of the Spartan constitution also shows the importance of unity and conformity in Lycurgan ideology. According to Xenophon, Lycurgus made leading Spartans 'of one mind' (ὁμογνώμονες). He also ensured not only that all Spartans obeyed the law, but that they all *wished* to do so, using state institutions to instil virtue in all.[121] The corollary of promotion of virtue was uncompromising vilification and punishment of citizens judged morally deficient,[122] of the kind practised by the Spartan exiles at Compasion.

116 On Lycurgan ideology, and its Hellenistic relevance, see, for example, Cartledge and Spawforth (1989), ch. 4; Kennell (1995); and Cartledge (2009), 113–19, all citing earlier bibliography.

117 Consider, for example, the belligerent rhetoric of Isocrates' *Archidamus*.

118 Admittedly, there was a rival tradition, most clearly represented in Thucydides (e. g. Thuc. 1.70.2–4; 5.63.2), that stereotypical Spartans were the opposite of spirited (compare Harris (2002), 179–80). However, the spirited stereotype appears to have become dominant at least from Plato's time (compare Pl. *Resp*. 544c2–3: Sparta as a paradigm of a timocratic regime, i. e. the type of regime in which the spirited part of the citizen body predominates). It was certainly the one which determined representations of the revolutionary Sparta of the mid-Hellenistic period (see, for example, Plut. *Cleom*. 36.6–7).

119 Compare Isoc. 6.15. For the Spartan preference for brevity with words, compare Hdt. 3.46; 7.226; Xen. *Hell*. 1.1.23; Livy 34.31.19.

120 Polyb. 6.48.2.

121 Xen. *Lac*. 8.1, 5; 10.4.

122 Xen. *Lac*. 9.3–6; 10.5.

Related to the emphasis on virtue and unity in Lycurgan ideology was disregard for, or distrust of, formal regulations, another tendency shown by the Spartan exiles at Compasion: according to Plutarch, Lycurgus distrusted written law, on the grounds that ethical standards should be imbued in the souls of citizens, providing guides which can be applied flexibly in particular situations.[123] Furthermore, the whole Lycurgan system was designed to achieve unconstrained collective freedom of the kind to which the Compasion exiles aspired: Xenophon claims that Lycurgus prohibited free Spartans from participating in commercial activities, thereby forcing them to dedicate themselves exclusively to those activities which bring freedom (ἐλευθερία) for poleis.[124]

Polybius would have had a Classical model for an attempt to present the fanatical behaviour of a group of Spartan exiles as a demonstration of dystopian tendencies inherent in Lycurgan ideology and institutions. In a section of his *Archidamus*, Isocrates makes Archidamus claim that the Spartans would 'become in reality' that of which their settled polis was only an imitation if they fled their city under attack and became a roving band of warriors.[125] This passage of Isocrates is almost certainly satirical: Isocrates implicitly criticises Spartan ideals by showing that they would best be realised by a band of destitute warrior refugees, anything but a truly utopian community. Such a band of warrior refugees would, as in the Lycurgan ideal, have complete 'leisure' (σχολή) to dedicate itself to war alone, disregarding all other aspects of life. It would be outstanding in virtue and habits, and not need to make use of a constitution (πολιτεία),[126] presumably because of the instinctive virtues and unity of its members.

The argument that Polybius intended in this case to call into question certain Lycurgan political ideals is consistent with Polybius' more explicit consideration of the merits and flaws of Lycurgus' constitution in Book VI of his *Histories*. Polybius there claims that the Lycurgan system promoted virtue among Spartans in the Archaic and Classical periods: the two key virtues of bravery and moderation were instilled in citizens through equality of property and a shared frugal lifestyle. The result was ὁμόνοια within the citizen body. However, Polybius also claims that the Lycurgan system simultaneously made the Archaic and Classical Spartans excessively aggressive towards other Greeks; it led them to conquer other cities and levy tribute.[127] Polybius' account of events at Compasion could well have been intended to symbolise how, by the mid-Hellenistic period, the belligerence which was the necessary corollary of Spartan ὁμόνοια was commonly directed, not against outsiders, but against fellow Spartans.

Admittedly, elsewhere in Book VI, Polybius praises the Lycurgan constitution less equivocally. However, the elements he praises in this way are very different from those reflected in the behaviour of the Spartans at Compasion. Polybius identifies the Lycurgan constitution as a fine example of a constitution blending aspects of the differ-

123 Compare Plut. *Lyc*. 13.1–3.
124 Xen. *Lac*. 7.2.
125 Isoc. 6.81; compare Azoulay (2006), 520–4.
126 Isoc. 6.75–6.
127 Polyb. 6.48–9.

ent traditional constitutions: the kings, the Gerousia and the assembly held each other in check, in a similar way to the different components of the Roman constitution.[128] This claim forms part of Polybius' advocacy of a distinctive conception of the way in which traditional constitutional elements should be combined, mentioned above: in a complex system distinguished by dynamic conflict and bargaining, not in a state of harmonious co-operation, the hallmark of traditional Greek conceptions of a good 'mixed constitution'.[129] However, the type of political interaction central to Polybius' notion of the Lycurgan constitution, involving competition and bargaining within the constraints of law and procedure, does not seem to have been favoured in mid-Hellenistic Spartan ideology. In any case, there was little trace of the influence of this model in the reported rhetoric and behaviour of the Spartan exiles at Compasion.

Overall, by offering a paradigmatic dystopian presentation of the Spartan exiles at Compasion, Polybius could have hoped not only to absolve Philopoemen of responsibility for the stoning of the Spartan suspects, but also to justify the step which Philopoemen took after this episode: the abolition of the Lycurgan laws and customs, including the famous education system, in favour of Achaian laws and institutions, presented as a surer route to true stability and unity.[130] This would have emerged, not as a symptom of the Achaian arrogance alleged by Livy, but as a rational response to a political and educational system which bred discord and fanaticism: an attempt to displace dangerous 'Spartan' virtues with reliable 'Achaian' virtues.

4. Conclusion: Polybius as a Sceptic about Idealistic Notions of Virtue and Community and an Advocate of 'Limited' Political Values

4.1. The Contrasts Between the Exile Groups as Evidence for Polybius' Wider Ethical and Political Outlook

The evidence considered in this article suggests that Polybius favoured 'limited' conceptions of virtue and the good polis, of the kinds exemplified by the Megalopolitan refugees of 223 BC. According to his ethical outlook, the virtuous man preserves πίστις above all else: he always keeps his word, respects contracts and the law and pays back what he owes. He does not necessarily engage in supererogative benefactions to his fellow men and fellow citizens, or directly pursue idealistic projects: he may well even be suspicious of them. Correspondingly, the good polis, to which the Achaian League approximates, is held together, not by virtue, education and shared idealism, but by universal respect for law, procedure and particular contracts. Ideals such as ὁμόνοια, virtue, patriotism and divine order, of the kind which inspired the Spartan exiles of 188 BC, may appear to be more praiseworthy and desirable, because more conducive to political order and

128 Polyb. 6.10, esp. 7; compare Asmis (2005), 382.
129 See especially Hahm (2009), 193–6.
130 Livy 38.34.2–3. Compare Polyb. 21.32c; Cartledge and Spawforth (1989), 81.

solidarity. In practice, however, their pursuit can lead to the acute partisanship and even fanaticism evident in the Spartan case, of the kind which can dissolve a polis. It is reliable 'Achaian' virtues, not more idealistic values such as those associated with the heroic Athenians of 480–79 BC, the ideal Aristotelian polis or Lycurgan Sparta, which can bring stability to the Peloponnese and the wider Greek world.

Although the two accounts of 'almost stoning' and stoning by refugees, at Messene in 223 BC and at Compasion in 188 BC, have been central to this article, the wide-ranging conclusions offered here are not based solely on those passages and the contrasts between them. It has been shown that Polybius also shows tolerance or approval of regulated, civilised pursuit of self-interest and perceived entitlements through political channels in other parts of his main political narrative: consider, for example, the references in this article to Polybius' moral analysis of the behaviour of Dyme, Pharai and Tritaia during the Social War, or of speeches in the Aetolian assembly in the aftermath of Cynoscephalae. Polybius' further discussion of second-century BC Spartan exiles, analysed in section 4.3 below, provides further evidence for the prominence of 'limited' political ideals in Polybius' narrative. In addition, Polybius' acceptance or embrace of self-interest and conflict as central elements of good political life is very evident in his more theoretical analysis of politics in Books II and VI: as discussed above, he not only praises the contractual character of Achaian and Roman political life, but also claims that human morality owes its existence to individuals calculating their future self-interest.

Nor is it solely the two main exile passages which suggest that Polybius was reacting in his ethical outlook primarily against idealistic community-centred notions, not against the view that goods should be distributed according to more equitable principles of personal desert:[131] those two passages have been set alongside other passages in the argument for that view. It has been possible to attribute particular targets to Polybius in some particular cases. As suggested above, certain representations of both Classical Athens and Classical Sparta serve as foils to Polybius' preferred political models in the two principal exile passages. Moreover, particular thinkers and schools sometimes come in for direct or indirect criticism. For example, Polybius is implicitly hostile to the utopianism of Plato's political thought in Book VI. Moreover, he was almost certainly thinking of Herodotus and Lycurgus when he wrote his polemical account of the decision-making of the Megalopolitan refugees of 223 BC. Similarly, Polybius' account of the Achaian League in Book II, as both an alliance and a quasi-polis, can be interpreted as a direct reaction against Aristotle or against the Peripatetic tradition; so too can Polybius' reference in Book V to the abject failure of the Peripatetic Prytanis to bring order to Megalopolis. It is not, however, possible in these last two cases to be certain whether Polybius' main target was Aristotle or contemporary Peripatetics, or whether he bracketed them together. The common thread unifying these various reactions against the political and ethical thinking of particular Classical and contemporary political thinkers was Polybius' scepticism about far-reaching notions of virtue and

131 The latter view is expressed in Erskine (1990), 154.

political community, and his preference for more 'limited' notions: that overall ethical and political position was probably more important than any particular rivalry or disagreement with a specific school of thought.

The interpretation of Polybius as an advocate of 'limited' ethical and political ideals is far more consistent with the evidence considered in this article than the interpretation of him as a straightforwardly amoralist or 'realist' thinker, a view prominent in the twentieth century.[132] Moreover, the evidence considered here suggests that it is preferable to see Polybius as in many parts of his work a quite innovative advocate of these 'limited' notions, centred on contracts, good faith and fair play, than to accept Eckstein's and Champion's revisionist views of Polybius as predominantly an advocate of quite traditional heroic or aristocratic values or of a straightforward Hellenic-barbarian dichotomy.[133]

4.2. Φιλανθρωπία as a Check on Pure Proceduralism

It is important to make clear that Polybius' ethics of πίστις and procedure did not downgrade all forms of fellow-feeling. On the contrary, Polybius probably thought that strict rule-following should be tempered by gentle, universal humanity towards one's fellow men. He presented an ethos of 'humanity' (φιλανθρωπία) as fundamental to the political functioning of the Achaian League.[134] Moreover, he attributed to a lack of humane character the duplicitous behaviour of a further group of Peloponnesian exiles, the exiles from Arcadian Kynaitha who betrayed their polis to the Aetolians during the Social War, after regaining their citizenship through the exchange of solemn oaths.[135] In Polybius' view, the Kynaithans' problem was that they had abandoned the Arcadian habit of organising choruses to soften the naturally hard characters of their citizens (μαλάττειν καὶ κιρνᾶν τὸ τῆς φύσεως αὔθαδες καὶ σκληρόν),[136] a move which was inconsistent with the humane ethos of the Arcadians as a whole (τὴν ἐν τοῖς ἤθεσι καὶ βίοις φιλοξενίαν καὶ φιλανθρωπίαν).[137]

Crucially, however, the humane dispositions favoured by Polybius were quite different in kind from the particularist civic friendship and solidarity central to much earlier Greek political thinking. Polybius thought that humane dispositions could ease relations between individuals whose relations were fundamentally based on contract, such as relations between Achaian citizens. He also thought that they could render citizens more peaceable in their approach to formal agreements, an influence sorely lacking at Kynaitha.

132 E. g. Walbank (1965), 8, 11.
133 Eckstein (1995), esp. 54, 272–84; Champion (2004).
134 Polyb. 2.38.8–9.
135 See Polyb. 4.17–21.
136 Polyb. 4.21.3.
137 Polyb. 4.20.1.

He was not attracted by the idea of attempting to build more substantial fellow-feeling and mutual devotion between fellow citizens of a polis or between humans in general.

4.3. Achaian Rhetoric concerning Spartan Exiles after Compasion

By way of conclusion, it is revealing to consider Polybius' account of the role in Peloponnesian politics of perhaps the best known Peloponnesian exiles of this period, the Spartan exile groups which repeatedly troubled the Roman Senate in the years after Compasion (188–179 BC). This account is interesting as additional confirmation of the centrality of 'limited' ethical and political ideals to Polybius' outlook, and further evidence for those ideals' practical importance. In his account, Polybius approvingly presents his father Lykortas placing great emphasis on good faith and strict reciprocity in the debates within the Achaian League about the ongoing Spartan exile problem after 188 BC.[138]

Immediately after Compasion, members of the incumbent regime at Sparta were forced into exile, whereas members of the group of 'old exiles' (those exiled before 192 BC) were restored to citizenship. In 184 BC, two restored members of the 'old exile' group, Areus and Alkibiades, came to complain to the Roman Senate about the Achaian emasculation of Sparta. In response, the Achaian League sentenced them to death. In 183 BC, no fewer than four different interest groups sent embassies to the Senate to petition for particular resolutions of the problems of disputed property resulting from repeated exilings and land redistributions. One of the parties was a group led by Chairon, who had been exiled by the Achaian League when Sparta joined the League in 192 BC. A Roman three-man commission recommended the restoration of these exiles and that Sparta should remain in the Achaian League. The Achaians agreed to this, but there followed violent unrest at Sparta, during which Sparta defected from the Achaian League and the 'old exiles' were again exiled.

When the situation was debated in the Achaian assembly in 182 BC, Lykortas argued that Sparta should be readmitted to the League, framing his arguments in terms of 'limited' virtue and reciprocity. This policy was 'advantageous' (συμφέρον) for two reasons: first, the Achaians would be receiving back a now dominant faction which had preserved good faith towards the League (διατετηρηκότας τὴν πρὸς τὸ ἔθνος πίστιν); second, those among the 'old exiles' who had behaved ungratefully and impiously in not repaying the Achaian League's good treatment of them (τῶν ἀρχαίων φυγάδων τοὺς ἀχαρίστως καὶ ἀσεβῶς ἀνεστραμμένους) were now in exile again. Other Achaians countered that the 'old exiles' had this time been illegitimately expelled; their expellers should not be favoured. The Achaian assembly agreed with this position, voting that Sparta should be readmitted to the League; those of the 'old exiles' who could prove that they had not been disloyal to the League could return to Sparta.[139]

138 For the narrative which follows, compare Briscoe (1967); Seibert (1979), 199–208.
139 Polyb. 23.17.5–18.5.

This latter provision excluded the likes of Areus and Alkibiades from restoration. These exiles appealed to the Senate for help, at which the Senate agreed to write to the Achaians about their predicament. Thinking that the Romans were not particularly serious, the Achaians voted to do nothing. The incumbent regime in Sparta then began to agitate strongly against the Achaian League, encouraging Messenian and Achaian exiles. It also undertook a redistribution of land in Sparta.

In 180 BC, the Achaians again received a letter from the Roman Senate regarding the remaining Spartan exiles. It was at this point that Lykortas most strongly advocated the preservation of agreements and contracts: the Romans would not press the matter once they realised that for the Achaians to accede to their requests would be for them 'to transgress the oaths, the laws and the inscriptions which hold together our common federal constitution' (παραβῆναι τοὺς ὅρκους, τοὺς νόμους, τὰς στήλας, ἃ συνέχει τὴν κοινὴν συμπολιτείαν ἡμῶν).[140] He thus voiced the assumption which has been presented in this article as central to Polybius' political thinking: fidelity to formal agreements holds together a stable and successful state.

Notably, Lykortas' rival Kallikrates himself subsequently violated principles of πίστις, as well as advocating the more general setting aside of oaths and agreements. The League voted in favour of Lykortas' resistance to reintegration of the exiles and sent Kallikrates to Rome to report the decision. Once in Rome, Kallikrates threw off his commission and instead reported his personal opinion: the Romans should take firmer control over the Greek states, favouring those factions which advocated the following of Roman instructions even in violation of laws, oaths and inscribed texts. The other faction in the Greek states commonly called for the preservation of local law and agreements, even to the detriment of Roman interests. The Achaians, for example, had made solemn promises to the Spartans not to restore the Spartan exiles.[141]

The Senate then voted for the restoration of the Spartan exiles, a decision which Kallikrates himself implemented when serving as Achaian general in 179 BC. As scholars have noted, Polybius probably saw this as the beginning of the descent of the Achaian League into pro- and then anti-Roman demagoguery.[142] Subsequent changes in the political culture of the Achaian League were probably, for Polybius, partly a product of direct Spartan influence.[143] Polybius probably also regarded them as results of the borrowing or coincidental adoption of Spartan-style fanatical, uncompromising ideology and rhetoric, of the kind which brought perpetual instability to post-Classical Sparta: note, for example, Polybius' portrayal of the dogmatic ethical language and invective of the anti-Roman demagogue Kritolaos in the build-up to the catastrophic Achaian War

140 Polyb. 24.8.4.

141 Polyb. 24.9.1–14.

142 For Kallikrates' embassy as a turning point, see Polyb. 24.10.10; cf. Ferrary (1988), 291–306; Champion (2004), 155–6.

143 For example, Polybius associated the Spartan League general Menalkidas with the final descent of the Achaian League into demagoguery in the 150s and 140s BC: Cartledge and Spawforth (1989), 87.

of 146 BC, which led to the permanent eclipse of the Achaian League.[144] New ideals and rhetoric replaced, to devastating effect, the studied emphasis on good faith, law and procedure which had, in Polybius' view, previously sustained the greatness of the Achaian League.[145]

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144 Polyb. 38.11.3–11, 12.8–11, 13.3; cf. Champion (2004), 166–7, 220–32.
145 Compare Ferrary (1988), 306: in Polybius' view, Philopoemen and Lycortas recognised that it was in the interests of the Achaians to insist on their strict entitlements in negotiations with the Romans, rather than to capitulate; the Romans might even respond favourably to persistence.

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